

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EG, IS, XF, IV

SUBJECT: IVORIAN VIEWS ON SUSPENSION OF SECRETARY KISSINGER'S
EGYPT-ISRAELI NEGOTIATIONS.

REF: ABIDJAN 0060

QM SUMMARY: IN COURSE OF MY TOUR D'HORIZON MEETING WITH FOREIGN MIN-
ISTER USHER TODAY, HE EXPRESSED REGRET, AND THAT OF PRESIDENT
HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY, ON SUSPENSION OF SECRETARY KISSINGER'S
NEGOTIATIONS WITH EGYPT AND ISRAEL. HE HOPES THE SECRETARY
WILL NOT BE TOO DISCOURAGED AND WILL NOT GIVE UP HIS EFFORTS
TO FIND PEACE IN MIDDLE EAST. HE ADDED GOIC VIEWS ON THIS PROBLEM.
END SUMMARY.

2. USHER BELIEVES IT IS NOW TIME FOR "GREAT POWERS" AND
OTHERS TO BE CANDID WITH BOTH ARABS AND ISRAELIS. WHILE
IVORY COAST HAS MOVED CLOSER TO THE ARABS IN THE PAST YEAR,
IT IS STILL PREPARED TO TELL THEM THAT THE SOLUTION TO THE
MIDDLE EAST'S PROBLEMS DOES NOT LIE IN THE DESTRUCTION OF
ISRAEL, AND THAT ISRAEL HAS THE RIGHT TO FEEL THAT ITS BORDERS
ARE SECURE. AT THE SAME TIME, GOIC WOULD HAVE ISRAEL KNOW THAT
IT CANNOT BE A PURELY "CONFESSIONAL" STATE; THAT ARABS ALREADY
WITHIN ITS BORDERS ARE ENTITLED TO FULL CITIZENSHIP: THAT
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PALESTINE REFUGEES WHO WISH TO RETURN AND WHO CAN PROVE THEY

HAVE NOT ENGAGED IN ANY TERRORISTIC ACTIVITIES SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO RETURN; THAT OTHER PALESTINE REFUGEES SHOULD BE COMPENSATED FOR THEIR LAND AND BELONGINGS; THAT ISRAEL CANNOT CONTINUE TO REGARD THE PLO AS "BANDITS" AND REFUSE TO NEGOTIATE WITH THEM; AND THAT, FINALLY, IT IS ESSENTIAL TO CREATE A PALESTINE STATE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. THE KEY, USHER SUGGESTS, IS THAT THE BORDERS OF BOTH ISRAEL AND TH PALESTINE STATE HAVE TO BE GUARANTEED.

3. I ASKED WHETHER HE THOUGHT THE GENEVA CONFERENCE WOULD BE A USEFUL NEXT STEP TOWARD PEACE. HIS RESPONSE WAS AFFIRMATIVE, ON THE GROUNDS THAT IT WOULD BRING ALL THE PARTIES CONCERNED TOGETHER TO DISCUSS (OR HAVE A "A DIALOGUE"--HOUPHOUET'S FAVORITE PHRASE FOR NEGOTIATIONS) POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS. HE DID NOT THINK THAT FURTHER "STEP-BY-STEP" NEGOTIONS WOULD BE USEFUL AT THIS TIME, SINCE EGYPT IS UNWILLING TO GET TOO FAR OUT OF LINE WITH ITS ARAB BREATHREN, SYRIA IS UNWILLING TO GO THIS ROUTE AND THE PLO IS OPPOSED TO ANYONE GOING THIS ROUTE.

4. USHER ASKED ME TO CONVEY THESE VIEWS, AS THE PRESIDENT'S, TO SECRETARY KISSINGER.

5. ALTHOUGH USHER APPRECIATES THAT THE SECRETARY HAS HAD TO KEEP HIS NEGOTIATING STRATEGY TO HIMSELF, HE WOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR ANYTHING I CAN TELL HIM ABOUT THE SECRETARY'S VIEWS AT THIS TIME. I PROMISED TO GIVE HIM ANY PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY THE SECRETARY OR HIS SPOKESMEN ON THIS SUBJECT.

6. COMMENT: THE GOIC WOULD STILL BE PREPARED TO PLAY A CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE IN FINDING A PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THE MIDDLE EAST DEBACLE. HAVING MOVED OVER PUBLICLY TOWARD THE ARAB SIDE IN THE PAST YEAR, WHILE RETAINING MUCH SYMPATHY FOR ISRAEL, HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY MIGHT BE HELPFUL TO US IN MEDIATION EFFORTS (SEE REFTEL, PARA 36).
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